Allocation of additional spectrum

1340. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the issue of allocation of additional spectrum and its Broadband roll out has been deliberated at length by the TRAI and the issue has now been placed before the Group of Ministers;

(b) whether Government are aware that COAI does not want competition and desires to continue working as a cartel which is not possible with the entry of CDMA operators; and

(c) if so, how Government propose to address the issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The TRAI recommendations include spectrum related issues for mobile and broadband services. Separately, a Group of Ministers has been constituted mainly to deal with vacation of spectrum from Defence for growth of mobile services.

(b) No Such reference has been received from COAI.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Exemption to BSNL on radio frequency

1341. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR:
SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to exempt Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) on radio frequency till the policy on spectrum is finalized;

(b) if so, the reasons for such favouritism to the PSU;

(c) whether Spectrum Policy is likely to be introduced shortly; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir. The requirements of BSNL and other telecom service providers are met as per laid down criteria and subject to availability of radio spectrum.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d) Formulation of Spectrum Policy, taking into account all relevant factors, is under consjderation. This would include mainly the efficient and optimal utilisation of spectrum, allocation procedure, spectrum pricing and introduction of emerging technologies.

Entry of NRIs and expatriates in top management of telecom companies

1342. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that telecom companies are likely to be allowed to have Non-Resident Indians and expatriates for the top job in their respective companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the likely effect of this decision on the Indian Telecom Industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir, The Government has enhanced the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) ceiling in the telecom sector from 49% to 74% *vide* Press Note No. 5 dated 03.11.2005, a copy of the Press Note is given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below). As per clauses 1.B & 1.G (iv) of the said Press Note, top jobs, as mentioned therein, have to be held by resident Indian citizens.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.